

U.S. Department of Education

Israel Periodic Update Report

Prepared July 2012

Background

At its September 1999 meeting, the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) determined that the accreditation standards used by the Council for Higher Education (CHE) to evaluate medical schools in Israel were comparable to those used to evaluate programs leading to the M.D. degree in the United States. A CHE decision in February 1999 authorized the establishment of a permanent committee, the Committee for Re-Evaluation of Medical Schools (hereafter, Committee), as the CHE entity responsible for the evaluation of medical schools in Israel.

At its September 2001, September 2002 and March 2004 meetings, the NCFMEA accepted the reports submitted by the CHE on the accreditation activities in Israel. During its September 2007 meeting the NCFMEA deferred the decision for the redetermination of accreditation comparability until additional information was received from the CHE regarding its site visit procedures; reevaluation and monitoring; substantive change procedures; safeguards against conflicts of interest and the inconsistent application of standards; and the effects of recent budgetary cuts. In 2008 Israel submitted supplementary materials to address the NCFMEA's request.

The NCFMEA accepted the submission and determined that the standards and processes used to accredit medical schools in Israel continued to be comparable to those used to accredit medical schools in the United States. In addition, the NCFMEA requested a report on the current status of Israel's accreditation activities to be reviewed at the Fall 2011 NCFMEA meeting. However, that meeting was postponed pending the appointment of new committee members and the designation of a committee chair.

The materials for consideration by the NCFMEA today comprise the country's report on the current status of accreditation activities in Israel. It should be noted that until recently, there have been four schools of medicine in Israel located in non-profit universities. The country's current report discusses a fifth medical school that has been established at another non-profit university.

Summary of Findings

Based on its review of the report and follow-up information submitted by the Council for Higher Education, Department staff concludes that Israel has provided the information requested by the NCFMEA.

Staff Analysis

Current status of medical schools

Country Narrative

There are currently four medical schools accredited by the Israeli CHE, which have been existed for many years in the following institutions:

- 1) Ben Gurion University (six-year program)
- 2) Hebrew University (six-year program)
- 3) Technion Institute of Technology (six-year program)
- 4) Tel Aviv University (six-year program + four-year program)

Three of the four medical schools (Ben Gurion, Technion, Tel Aviv) operate a four year program for international students (in addition to the 'regular' program).

5)A fifth new medical school was opened in the Galilee- Bar Ilan University Medical School (provisionally accredited):

In an attempt to address the shortage of physicians in the state of Israel and to provide additional opportunities for higher education to the peripheral areas of Israel, the CHE issued a tender for the establishment of a fifth medical school in the Galilee to operate a four-year program in medicine. Three universities submitted proposals and on January 12, 2010, Bar Ilan University was selected to submit a full program request for accreditation. The professional committee established to review the proposals, composed of two members of the Planning and Budgeting Committee (PBC) of the CHE, one CHE member, Prof. Irun Cohen who had chaired the Medicine Evaluation Committee, and the Director General of the Ministry of Health, was granted the authority to serve as an accreditation committee and to review the university's program according to the Standards for Evaluation of Medical Schools and Medicine Programs, 2007 (appendix 1) and the final proposal.

Based on the work of the accreditation committee, on January 13, 2011, the CHE ruled to accept its recommendation and grant Bar Ilan University approval to open its first year of studies in October 2011. The exact work of the accreditation committee will be detailed in the section on accreditation activities.

Four Year M.D. Degree Program:

As mentioned, in addition to the six year medical programs that are operating in

the four universities, Tel Aviv University also operates a four year M.D. degree program (with an additional internship year) for students who have completed a Bachelor's Degree. This program was first created in 2007. Originally, the CHE Standards required that the duration of M.D. programs be six years plus one year of rotating internship. However, this standard was subsequently revised to read "The program of education in the art and science of medicine leading to the M.D. degree must be of six years duration plus one year of rotating internship. Additionally, the CHE approved that institutions will be able to submit a proposal to establish a four-year study program in Medicine (with an additional internship year) for the "Medical Doctor" (M.D.) degree, designated for students that hold of the "Bachelor of Science" degree." The CHE approved institutions to submit requests to open such programs and the Tel Aviv University program was approved to open in the 2008-2009 school year.

The four year program at Tel Aviv University is designed for Israelis who have completed a Bachelor's Degree (regardless of the field) and is based on the American model whereby students study medicine for four years after completing their Bachelor's degree. In addition, the students will complete a one year rotating internship as in other Israeli programs.

The four-year program is divided into three modules. The first module focuses on academic studies over the period of two years. In the first year, students study basic sciences and in the second pre-clinical studies are taught based on a multi-disciplinary approach. During the second module, which lasts two years, students engage in clerkships in various hospitals in central Israel. The majority of the studies are done in small groups through bedside teaching. During the fifth year, the third module, students undergo a 12 month internship in hospitals recognized by the Ministry of Health around the country. In addition, every student must submit a final paper in order to receive the M.D. degree. The goal of the final paper is to imbue students with skills in research, writing analysis and synthesis of results in medical research, and medical research conclusions.

The new four-year program is unique in Israel adding two additional dimensions to the current medical programs in Israel. Firstly, this program gives an opportunity to diversify the student population by integrating students with various academic backgrounds, who have greater experience in research and will likely engage in future medical research. Furthermore, as is the practice in similar programs at prestigious universities in the U.S., the program will incorporate management courses, biomedical engineering and related fields in the training of physicians in Israel. It is also expected and encouraged that students in the program will pursue a joint M.D.-Ph.D. track.

Analyst Remarks to Narrative

The country reports that the four long-standing medical schools continue to operate in Israel. They are Ben Gurion University, Technion Institute of Technology, Tel Aviv University, and Hebrew University. All but Hebrew University also offer a six-year medical degree program (plus one year of rotating internship) for international students. Tel Aviv University also operates a four-year M.D. degree program (with an additional internship year) for students who have completed a Bachelor's Degree. (The report discusses the composition of this four-year medical program in more detail.)

Recently, a new medical school, Bar Ilan University Medical School, was opened and is currently provisionally accredited by the CHE. The country reports that this new medical school, which offers a four-year program in medicine, was opened to alleviate the doctor shortage and to provide educational opportunities in the Galilee region of Israel. In January 2011 the CHE granted the school approval to open its first year of studies in October 2011.

This section of the Guidelines asks the country to indicate the most recent date each school has gone through the accreditation review process, together with each school's current accreditation status. In its narrative materials, the CHE noted that Bar Ilan University Medical School is currently provisionally accredited. In addition, since there were no major issues noted regarding the four long-standing medical schools, it appears that they retain their previous full accreditation. However, rather than presume this to be the case, the NCFMEA may wish to inquire if any of those schools may have been granted another status for some reason.

In addition, under the following criterion, the CHE reported that Ben Gurion University and Tel Aviv University were visited in October 2010; Hebrew University was visited in January 2011; and Technion Institute of Technology was visited in June 2011; and that the CHE met in November 2011 to make its decisions regarding those institutions. The CHE also noted that those schools will be re-evaluated in 2012-13 and 2013-14. Since the normal accreditation cycle for medical schools in Israel is reported to be six years, the NCFMEA may wish to inquire regarding the depth, extent, and purpose of those visits in light of the six-year cycle.

Country Response

Indeed there has been no change in the status of the four long-standing medical schools and they continue to retain full accreditation.

The visits held in October 2010-June 2011 were part of the follow up review process. This is a different process to the quality evaluation process scheduled for 2012-13 and 2013-2014.

The main differences between these two processes are:

The follow up review process examines only the implementation of

recommendations made by the last evaluation committee in the previous cycle of evaluation (2008); the reviewers are only asked to comment on the extent to which recommendations of the evaluation committee from the previous evaluation cycle have been implemented. The follow up review is carried out by an individual reviewer or a small committee (the follow up on the medical schools was conducted by a small committee) made up usually of local members (Israelis). They hold shorter visits and provide a short and concise report dealing only with the implementation of the recommendations made by the last evaluation committee

In the evaluation process, however, the overall quality of study programs is examined. The evaluation committee is charged with making any recommendations it deems necessary in order to improve the quality of medical studies in the institutions under evaluation. The evaluation process is carried out by a larger, international committee made up mainly by foreigners (non-Israelis). They hold extensive site visits and submit detailed reports and the quality of the medical programs at the time of the evaluation, including recommendations for improvement.

Analyst Remarks to Response

The country's response to the draft staff analysis confirmed that the four long-standing medical schools currently retain full accreditation. In addition, the response clarified that the relatively recent visits to the long-standing medical schools were abbreviated visits focused on the issues that were identified during the previous evaluation for continued accreditation. Those schools will undergo thorough and complete on-site visits before they can receive another 6-year grant of full accreditation. As a result of this additional information, Department staff is satisfied that the country has provided a comprehensive response.

Staff Conclusion: Comprehensive response provided

Overview of accreditation activities

Country Narrative

Follow-up on the evaluation committee's recommendations:

In accordance with the CHE's resolution from April 1, 2008 regarding the Medicine Evaluation Committee Reports, each institution submitted an interim report in the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year detailing its implementation of the committee's recommendations and further changes that have been made to the medical programs.

A follow up committee was established in January 2010 as per the CHE's resolution to review the institutions' reports. The committee was composed of three Israeli professors of Medicine: Prof. Irun Cohen, Prof. Shimon Glick and

Prof. Menachem Finaro. The committee reviewed the four interim reports submitted by the institutions and requested additional information from each institution on the topics that the committee determined were not fully addressed.

Site visits were conducted at the four Medical Schools: Tel Aviv University on October 10, 2010; Hebrew University on January 20, 2011; Ben Gurion University on October 25, 2010; Technion Institute on June 6, 2011. As is the regular practice of the CHE, site visits were used to clarify the information sent in the interim reports, meet with various stakeholders in the medical schools (including senior administration, faculty, students, and graduates) and to observe the facilities.

The follow-up committee's report was discussed by the CHE Subcommittee for QA and at the CHE Plenum. The follow up committee's report and the CHE resolution of November 29th, 2011 were uploaded to the CHE's website (in Hebrew).

The follow up report will be used as the basis for the next upcoming re-evaluation of the medical schools in the 2012-2013 & 2013-14 academic years.

BGU International School accreditation of overseas clinical sites:

Due to the requirement of the American Department of Education in Washington, the Medical School for International Health (MSIH) at Ben Gurion University was required to evaluate sites to be used for an eight week clerkship in international health for senior medical students in the developing world. This program contains three elements: a two week elective on a clinical service at the teaching hospital, a three week rotation in a primary care setting and two weeks dedicated to data collection for a project to be submitted to the school as part of the requirements for graduation.

Countries approved by NCFMEA were selected for the eight week clerkship and teams composed of a faculty member from MSIH and a representative from the CHE visited each of the sites to determine quality equivalency. The CHE appointed three officials, all professors of Medicine in Israeli medical schools, to review three clinical sites in India. The teams reviewed the three sites using the QAD guidelines (Appendix 2) in line with its quality assessment standards.

Following examination of the CHE appointed officials' reports, the CHE determined the clinical teaching in India at the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences, Christian Medical College, and St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences to be consistent with its quality assessment standards and as such approved the three sites for the purposes of clinical education.

Ben Gurion University received final approval from the United States Department of Education on February 24, 2011 to utilize the three clinical sites in India for short-term medical site training.

Bar Ilan University Medical School in the Galilee:

On November 30, 2010, the CHE established an accreditation committee to examine the proposal for Bar Ilan University Medical School in the Galilee to open a four year M.D. program. The accreditation committee reviewed the proposal and met with Bar Ilan Medical School's senior administration on January 4, 2011 during which Bar Ilan University presented the CHE with a list of new scientist-researcher-lecturers that it had succeeded in recruiting to the new school along with their credentials. On January 8, 2011, the committee received a list of courses and senior academic faculty who would teach in the first semester of the four-year M.D. program. After reviewing the material and the proposal that Bar Ilan University submitted detailing the study program, the accreditation committee requested additional information which it was presented on January 12, 2011 including teaching assignments for the first semester. The committee was especially impressed with Bar Ilan University's advancement in recruiting scientist-researcher-lecturers and integrating them into the teaching schedule and research design of the Medical School in the Gaililee. Based on Bar Ilan University's accordance with CHE accreditation standards, the accreditation committee decided on January 13, 2011 to approve Bar Ilan University to open the first year of its four-year M.D. program at the Medical School in the Galilee beginning in October 2011. The decision was reached based on the proposal, supplementary material and commitments concerning courses and faculty members that it had submitted to the committee declaring that the new program was in line with the CHE's accreditation standards.

Following the approval of Bar Ilan University to open the first semester of the four-year M.D. program, the medical school was requested to submit syllabi, detail curricula, teaching assignments, a report detailing the strategic recruitment plan of the medical school, the exact employment details of the new faculty members, installation of research facilities in the new school as well as the teaching program which includes the central models for clinical clerkships. The teaching program also included the final list of teachers and senior faculty members, their specific roles and teaching load in the program. The final program submitted according to the CHE's required format included the semester and yearly curriculum, faculty list and CVs, faculty course load, student admission requirements, and details concerning physical infrastructure and libraries. With the accreditation of the Bar Ilan University Medical School in the Galilee, the CHE granted Bar Ilan University the authority to conduct medical studies and grant degrees in medicine (M.D.).

Analyst Remarks to Narrative

Activities within the requested reporting period include:

At the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year, each of the four existing medical schools submitted an interim report detailing its implementation of the official recommendations that were previously made. Those reports were reviewed in January 2010 and additional information was requested, as

appropriate.

Each existing medical school was site visited as follows: Ben Gurion University and Tel Aviv University in October 2010; Hebrew University in January 2011; and Technion Institute of Technology in June 2011. The report notes that the CHE's November 2011 decisions regarding these institutions have been posted (in Hebrew) on the agency's website. In addition, follow-up reports from the schools will provide the basis of the CHE's upcoming re-evaluations in 2012-13 and 2013-14.

The report noted that three clinical sites in India used by the Ben Gurion University Medical School for International Health were visited and evaluated by CHE representatives and a school faculty member. As a result, Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences, Christian Medical College, and St. John's National Academy of Health Science were approved for limited periods of clinical education.

During November 2010 through January 2011, CHE representatives reviewed and approved the new Bar Ilan University Medical School's application to begin a four-year medical program in October 2011. Since it is a four-year program of study, a baccalaureate degree may be required in order to enroll, however, the country's report did not address this matter. In addition, the report did not address when an on-site visit will be conducted now that the school is operational. The NCFMEA may wish to inquire about one or both of these areas.

Country Response

We would like to emphasize that the self-study reports prepared by the medical schools as part of the evaluation process serve as the basis for the QA process together with the follow up reports prepared by follow up reviewers referring to the extent to which the recommendations of the previous evaluation committee were implemented.

Indeed the successful completion (a GPA of at least 80) of a baccalaureate degree (in life sciences, exact sciences etc.) is one of the prerequisites for admission to the four-year program of study at the BIU medical school.

In November 2010 the CHE established an accreditation committee to examine Bar Ilan University's proposal to open a four year medical school. In January 2011 this accreditation committee recommended to approve the opening of the BIU medical school as of October 2011. The CHE adopted the accreditation committee's recommendation and decided to open the BIU medical school as of October 2011. The accreditation committee also serves as a superior steering committee and it established a sub-committee (composed of 2 of its own members and an additional member who is a leading academic in the field of medicine) to monitor and oversee all aspects of the progress of the medical study program at the Bar Ilan University medical school until it receives full accreditation. The sub-committee reports back to the accreditation committee

and it is in charge of providing information on progress in all relevant areas that will ultimately serve as the basis of a decision pertaining to full accreditation of this program.

The sub-committee will hold site visits based on its discretion in order to examine the progress until the BIU medical program receives final accreditation. The most recent site visit was in July 2012. Once final accreditation is granted, the BIU medical study program will be part of the same six-year cycle quality evaluation process as the other four long-standing medical schools.

Analyst Remarks to Response

The country's response to the draft staff analysis confirmed that a baccalaureate degree is a prerequisite for admission into the new four-year medical program at Bar Ilan University Medical School. In addition, the response noted that a subcommittee of the CHE's accreditation committee is monitoring the new medical program until it is able to attain full accreditation. The subcommittee's most recent on-site visit to the new medical school was conducted in July 2012. As a result of this additional information, Department staff is satisfied that the country has provided a comprehensive response.

Staff Conclusion: Comprehensive response provided

Laws and regulations

Country Narrative

Since the submission of the materials for review to the NCFMEA in August 2008, there have been no amendments made to the Council for Higher Education Law (1958).

Analyst Remarks to Narrative

The country reported that there have been no changes to the laws governing medical education in Israel.

Standards

Country Narrative

As described in the CHE's original correspondence with the NCFMEA, the CHE implements two separate processes: 1. Accreditation - which is carried out upon the establishment of a new medical school, and 2. Evaluation (QA) - which is carried out periodically in existing medical schools. External committees composed of leading academics in the field of medicine appointed by the CHE carry out both processes. The principal difference in the composition of these committees is that the members of the Accreditation Committee are Israelis

whereas the majority of the members (including the Chair) of the Evaluation Committees are non Israelis.

The CHE's procedure for granting Accreditation to institutions of higher education (including medical schools), and also to study-programs, involves a prerequisite site visit. A CHE committee conducts the site visit and inspects all relevant aspects of the higher education institution/study-program (such as the curriculum, admission conditions, facilities, etc); interviews leading figures (such as the Rector - equivalent to an American Provost of the University, the Dean, etc.); meets with faculty members and students; and suggests improvements. The committee must conduct the site visit in all the school's separate campuses. This is an interactive process culminating in a final and comprehensive report that is submitted to the CHE. The CHE, in turn, decides whether to grant the university authorization to provide medical education and to grant academic degrees in the field of medicine. Standards designed for the evaluation of medical schools and medical education (2007) have not been recently altered and continue to be utilized in the accreditation process.

As part of the CHE's quality assessment mechanism, which assures the continued quality and compliance with standards in higher education, programs are requested to submit self-study reports prepared according to the CHE's Guidelines for Self Evaluation (Appendix 3). Every year before the publication of the guidelines to the programs undergoing evaluation, the QAD reviews the guidelines and makes the appropriate alterations based on feedback and developments in the field of quality assessment. The guidelines are generic for all disciplines, but the CHE works with the programs in order to most properly reflect the character of their program in the self evaluation report. These reports are used for the basis of the evaluation and cover the main topics which the committees review: organizational structure, study program, students, faculty, teaching and learning outcomes, research, and quality assessment mechanisms (to assure that the schools and universities are conducting continuous QA practice and monitoring the quality of their programs). Recent changes to the guidelines emphasize the role of intended learning outcomes to evaluate the extent to which the programs have defined the qualities which they intend their graduates to possess. In addition, programs are requested to submit teaching evaluation scores to assure quality teaching and the existence of proper mechanisms for teaching evaluation.

Analyst Remarks to Narrative

The country reported that there have been no changes to the accreditation standards adopted in 2007. However, there have been some changes to the guidelines for preparing each school's self-evaluation report. The changes emphasize the role of intended learning outcomes. An evaluation is required of the extent to which each medical program defines the qualities that their graduates are expected to possess. In addition, each program is requested to submit teaching evaluation scores in order to document not only quality teaching, but the existence of proper mechanisms for evaluating teaching as

well.

Processes and procedures

Country Narrative

Site visit regulations:

One of the comments that we received from the staff analysis of our original review by the NCFMEA in July 2007 was regarding the issue of visiting the clinical clerkships during committees' site visits. Although our evaluation committee had conducted a site visit to each one of the schools and had met with clerkship coordinators, the department heads of clinical departments and the directors of the hospitals (where the clerkships take place) and discussed the clerkship issues in detail with the students, we had no formal regulation requiring evaluation committees to visit the clerkships or discuss clerkship matters.

Upon consideration, we added an obligatory tour of all facilities including clinical clerkships where applicable into the regulations regarding the site visits (listed in the appendix to the letter of appointment, Appendix 4).

2.1 The Committee shall visit the institutions and the academic units being evaluated – if possible - within 4-6 months of receiving the self-evaluation reports. The purpose of the visit is to verify and update the information submitted in the self-evaluation report, clarify matters where necessary, inspect the educational environment and facilities first hand, etc. During the visit, the Committee will meet with the heads of the institution, faculty members, students, alumni, administrative staff, and any other persons it considers necessary. In addition, the Committee will tour the facilities of the institution (libraries, laboratories, class rooms, and clinical clerkships where applicable).

Composition of committees

The CHE's original policy on composition of evaluation committees stated: The on-site evaluators (who are also members of the re-evaluation committee) hold senior positions in the medical field, and some of them have experience as members of different CHE committees. As a recent amendment to our criteria for committee members of the evaluation committees, we have determined that QA committees will be primarily composed of international members. The consideration for this change is based on our attempt to limit conflict of interests and to increase the international perspective that is presented by the committee. The policy, as appears in our Regulations for the Appointment of Quality Assessment Committees, Timetable for Reports' Submission and Declaration Concerning Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality (Appendix 5), reads:

1. Quality assessment (QA) committees are international committees. Namely,

the majority of the committees' members will be non-Israeli. The chairperson of the committee will be non-Israeli as well.

New Regulations for the follow-up review process

The review process following the submission of the QA reports to the CHE, designed to assure the implementation of committees' recommendations in the institutions/schools, was reconfigured on June 5, 2011 (Appendix 6). According to the new policy, the follow-up process will be based on the resolution that the CHE accepts upon submission of the QA evaluation committee reports. If the institutions are requested to submit an implementation plan to the CHE, as is the generally accepted practice, it will be submitted within a few months of the CHE's resolution, reviewed by the CHE and approved by the CHE's QA subcommittee. Approximately one year following the resolution, the institutions are generally requested to submit a report detailing the implementation of the recommendations. The institutions are requested to include with the implementation report an updated curriculum and list of faculty as well as relevant information concerning the changes made as a result of the evaluation reports. The implementation reports will be reviewed by a committee or individual reviewer (depending on the CHE decision) appointed by the CHE. Following the committee's review of the materials, it can request supplementary information or to conduct a site visit at the institutions. Based on the committee's final report regarding the implementation of the QA recommendations, the CHE will reach a final decision on the subject.

The regulations will come into affect for all programs beginning with the submission of the Biology/Life Science Committee's reports in July 2011 and will be applied to the Medicine programs at the end of the next evaluation. Implementation reports will be used as the basis for the following QA committee's evaluation.

Publication of Ad Hoc Committees' Reports

On December 9, 2010, the CHE decided to publish the reports of the ad hoc committees established to review the implementation of quality assessment committees' reports on the CHE's website. All reports are thus available to the public and reflect the latest accreditation status of the study programs.

Analyst Remarks to Narrative

The changes reported by the country include a new requirement that all facilities must be toured, including clinical clerkships, where appropriate. In addition, the visiting committee is expected to conduct a site visit within four to six months after receiving the self-evaluation report, if possible.

Regarding the composition of on-site evaluation committees, the CHE has determined that international members, as opposed to Israelis, will be predominantly used for Quality Assessment visits, while the CHE will continue to

use teams comprised primarily of Israelis for the accreditation visit to a new medical school. This change was initiated in order to better limit conflicts of interest and to "increase the international perspective that is presented by the committee."

Regarding the follow-up to the CHE review of the school's self-evaluation report, the report notes that some changes have been approved to ensure that the CHE's recommendations are implemented by the school.

Now, when an institution is requested to submit an implementation plan in response to CHE findings, it will be submitted within a few months to the CHE for review and approval by the Quality Assurance subcommittee. Normally within a year, the schools will be expected to submit a detailed report documenting their implementation of the CHE recommendations to that point in time. The detailed report will be expected to also include an updated curriculum and list of faculty. Upon receipt, the CHE may ask for supplementary materials or schedule a site visit before it reaches its final decision. These latest changes will become effective for the medical programs at the end of the next evaluation cycle.

Finally, the report notes that the CHE decided to publish on its website the reports of the ad hoc committees that review the implementation of the quality assessment committee reports.

Schedule of upcoming accreditation activities

Country Narrative

The four 'veteran' study programs in Medicine will undergo the self-evaluation process in the 2012-2013 academic year. Programs will be requested: 1. to complete a self evaluation report in accordance with the QAD Guidelines for Self Evaluation; 2. to review all changes that took place since the last evaluation process.

An evaluation committee designed to review these four programs, composed of leading academics in the field of Medicine, will conduct site visits during the 2013-2014 academic year. According to our regulations, outlined in the appendix to letter of appointment and the regulations for the appointment of quality assessment committees, committees are requested to submit their reports no later than four months after they have completed the on-site visits. Thus, we expect to receive the evaluation committee's reports by the end of the 2013-2014 academic year.

As for the new fifth Medical school of Bar Ilan University – this program is being reviewed by a specific committee that monitors the program on an on-going basis, thus this new school is not yet included in the 'regular' QA system. Once the school is well established, and has a cohort of graduates it will be included in the QA system.

We hope that this explanation provides the sufficient materials to reflect the ongoing activity that the CHE conducts to maintain high quality standards for accrediting new and existing medical schools. We look forward to hearing from you in the near future regarding the NCFMEA meeting scheduled for October 30, 2012, as was mentioned in the letter of May 15, 2012, from Ms. Kay W. Gilcher to Ms. Michal Neumann so that we can make the needed arrangements regarding our representative to this case.

Analyst Remarks to Narrative

As noted earlier, the four long-established medical programs will conduct their self-studies during the 2012-13 academic year, followed by undergoing an on-site review during the 2013-2014 academic year. The CHE expects to receive the visiting team reports by mid-2014, after which the consideration of those reports will begin.

The new Bar Ilan University Medical School is currently undergoing interim monitoring of an unspecified nature and will be regularly reviewed under the quality assurance system once it becomes “well established, and has a cohort of graduates.” It is unclear to Department staff what type of interim monitoring is currently being conducted; and how large must the cohort of students be before the school can be considered well established and reviewed under the regular evaluation system. The NCFMEA may wish to inquire further regarding these matters.

Country Response

As a rule, in Israel the regular QA evaluation system deals only with study programs that have reached a steady state, finalized the accreditation process and received the status of full accreditation, and has a graduated cohort of students.

As mentioned above, the committee established to examine Bar Ilan University's proposal for accreditation also serves as a superior steering committee and has established a sub-committee (composed of 2 of its own members and an additional member who is a leading academic in the field of medicine) to monitor and oversee all aspects of BIU's medical study program's progress until it receives full accreditation. The sub-committee reports back to the accreditation committee and it is in charge of providing information on progress in all relevant areas, such as: faculty recruitment, level of student, curriculum, facilities, that will ultimately serve as the basis of a decision pertaining full accreditation of this program.

Once the study program reaches a steady state, receives full accreditation and has graduated cohorts of around 70 students it will be reviewed under the regular QA evaluation system together with the four other well-established/veteran medical schools.

Analyst Remarks to Response

The country's response to the draft staff analysis confirmed that Bar Ilan University Medical School is currently undergoing regular monitoring by a subcommittee that reports back to the accreditation committee of the CHE. The medical program needs to have graduated approximately 70 students before it will be considered developed sufficiently for regular CHE monitoring and evaluations, such as those conducted at the four long-standing medical schools. In the interim, the special subcommittee will regularly monitor the school's students, curriculum, facilities, and faculty recruitment, to name a few areas. As noted previously, the subcommittee conducted its most recent on-site monitoring of Bar Ilan University Medical School during July 2012. As a result of this additional information, Department staff is satisfied that the country has provided a comprehensive response.

Staff Conclusion: Comprehensive response provided
